
ELIZABETH HATFIELD.

FEBRUARY 29, 1904.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. ALGER, from the Committee on Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 8124.]

The Committee on Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 8124) granting an increase of pension to Elizabeth Hatfield, have examined the same and report:

The report of the Committee on Invalid Pensions of the House of Representatives, hereto appended, is adopted and the passage of the bill is recommended.

The House report is as follows:

George W. Hatfield, the husband of this beneficiary, served as first lieutenant and captain of Company A, Eleventh Ohio Infantry, from June 20, 1861, to June 7, 1863, when his resignation, based upon a medical certificate showing him to be suffering from jaundice, general debility, and diarrhea was accepted.

He applied for pension on June 29, 1880, on account of chronic diarrhea and resulting inflammation of the bowels, and was pensioned in 1889 for chronic diarrhea and resulting disease of rectum contracted while holding the rank of captain at \$5 per month from discharge, at \$10 from March 21, 1888, and at \$20 from November 20, 1889.

Elizabeth Hatfield, the beneficiary named in the bill, and now 65 years of age, who married the officer on May 11, 1858, is now pensioned under the act of June 27, 1890, at \$8 per month.

The officer died February 23, 1892, from cerebral hemorrhage.

Her claim under the general law was rejected in March, 1894, upon the ground that her husband's death cause was not a result of the chronic diarrhea and resulting disease of rectum for which he had been pensioned.

This action of the Pension Bureau was affirmed by Assistant Secretary Reynolds under date of December 8, 1894, upon the ground that the evidence of the attending physician, filed by the beneficiary in the Pension Bureau, was insufficient to show that the officer's fatal illness was either directly or indirectly the result of the pensioned causes, and that it clearly appeared from the certificate of the board of surgeons who examined the officer within three months prior to his death that he was then in a fair normal condition, excepting the disability due to chronic diarrhea and resulting disease of rectum.

This certificate of examination, dated December 9, 1891, and made by the Dayton, Ohio, board of surgeons, rated him \$24 for piles and disease of rectum and resulting neurasthenia, and this board of surgeons then stated that the officer's nervous condition and neurasthenia was, in their opinion, the result of the disease of the rectum.

The beneficiary filed in the Pension Bureau the affidavits of Doctors Goodhue and Eddings, the last-named one testifying that he treated the officer for about six months

immediately preceding his death, during which time he had two slight attacks of paralysis, with about three months of time as an interval between them; that the officer was very much emaciated from indigestion and chronic diarrhea; that his attacks of paralysis always followed or attended a straining at stool during the condition of constipation which followed his attacks of diarrhea; that it was possible and quite probable that cerebral hemorrhage, from which he died, was indirectly due to the chronic diarrhea.

Doctor Goodhue testified that he treated the officer during his last illness; that he died of cerebral hemorrhage due to degenerative affection of the arterial system caused by chronic diarrhea; that he had two similar attacks before while straining at stool during periods of constipation following diarrhea.

In the light of the medical testimony filed, your committee are of the opinion that the doubts in the case should be resolved in favor of the beneficiary, and that she be granted a pension at the rate of \$20 per month, the rate provided by law for the widow of a captain.

The passage of the bill is therefore recommended.

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